

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An endoscopic mouthguard comprising:

a bite block comprising a generally annular body adapted to be inserted into the mouth of a patient so as to maintain the upper and lower teeth of the patient in a spaced apart relationship and define an endoscopic passage for introduction of an endoscope into the oral cavity of the patient, the bite block including a gas delivery passage for delivery of a gas to the oral cavity of the patient; and

a gas distribution manifold detachably engaged with said bite block, the gas distribution manifold comprising:

at least one inlet port for receiving gas from a gas supply;

at least one nasal outlet port in fluid communication with the inlet port and adapted so as to direct gas to or toward the nasal passages of the patient; and

an oral outlet port in fluid communication with the inlet port and configured such that when the gas distribution manifold is engaged with the bite block the oral outlet port is in fluid communication with the gas delivery passage,

attachment means for attaching the manifold to the patient so as to hold the manifold in position on the patient when the manifold is disengaged from the bite block;

and when the gas distribution manifold is disengaged from the bite block and the bite block is removed from the mouth of the patient the oral outlet port is adapted to direct gas over or toward the mouth of the patient.

2. (Original) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the at least one nasal port comprises a pair of apertures arranged such that gas flowing from said apertures is directed toward the patient's nostrils from a position below the nose of the patient.

3. (Original) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the gas distribution manifold further includes a pair of tubular portions each adapted to extend at least partly into each nostril of the patient and defining two nasal outlet ports.

4. (Original) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the at least one nasal port comprises a single elongate aperture, the single elongate aperture extending laterally to the patient in use such that gas is delivered to both nostrils of the patient.

5. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the oral outlet port is a generally elongate aperture extending laterally relative to the patient in use.

6. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the gas distribution manifold is detachably engaged with the bite block by at least one frangible portion extending between the bite block and the gas distribution manifold.

7. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the bite block and the gas distribution manifold each further include respective cooperating engagement means configured such that the gas distribution manifold is detachably and attachably engageable with the bite block.

8. (Original) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 7, wherein the respective cooperating engagement means comprise compliant interlocking formations integrally formed with the gas distribution manifold and the bite block.

9. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the gas delivery passage comprises a first portion which is integrally formed with the annular body and defines a gas flow passage between the oral cavity and a front region of the annular body, and a second portion which provides a connection between the oral outlet port and the first portion, said second portion having a distal end adapted to engage with the oral outlet port to provide gas communication between the oral outlet port and the gas delivery passage.

10. (Original) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 9, wherein the gas delivery passage is of slot shape in cross-section with the longitudinal axis of the slot shape extending transverse to the axis of the annular body.

11. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic passage according to claim 1, wherein the gas delivery passage is integrally formed with the annular body and arranged such that when in use, the gas delivery passage is positioned superiorly to the endoscopic passage.

12. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the gas delivery passage terminates in a rearward facing opening which is arranged so as to deliver gas toward the rear of the oral cavity.

13. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the gas distribution manifold further includes a tubular connector extending from the inlet port, said connector having a distal end engageable with a gas supply conduit.

14. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1 further including at least one obturator engagement formation integrally formed with the bite block, wherein the at least one obturator engagement formation provides an attachment point for an obturator member, the obturator member adapted to be used for depressing a patient's tongue to thereby provide improved access to the pharynx of the patient.

15. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1 wherein the endoscopic passage has a diameter of at least 20 mm so as to allow the passage of a 60Fr dilator therethrough .

16. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1 wherein an outer surface of the annular body includes a contact portion adapted to be engaged by the teeth of the patient when the annular body is operatively positioned within the mouth of the patient.

17. (Original) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 16, wherein a cushioning member is affixed to the contact portion so as to distribute the load imparted to the bite block by the patient's teeth.

18. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1 , wherein the bite block in includes an outer peripheral flange adapted to overlies the lips of the patient.

19. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the bite block and the gas distribution manifold are formed from a resilient polymeric material.

20. (Previously Presented) An endoscopic mouthguard according to claim 1, wherein the gas distribution manifold further includes an attachment means for securing the gas distribution manifold to the patient.

21. (Currently Amended) A gas distribution manifold for providing a gas to a patient, the gas distribution manifold comprising:

at least one inlet port for receiving a gas from a gas supply;

at least one nasal outlet port in fluid communication with the inlet port and adapted to direct gas to the nasal passages of the patient; and

an oral outlet port in fluid communication with the inlet port and adapted to direct gas over or toward the mouth of the patient;

attachment means for attaching the manifold to the patient so as to hold the manifold in position on the patient when the manifold is disengaged from the bite block;

said gas distribution manifold being detachably engageable with a bite block having a gas delivery passage for delivery of a gas to the oral cavity of the patient;

wherein the oral outlet port is ~~configured~~ configured such that when the gas distribution manifold is engaged with the bite block the oral outlet port is in fluid communication with the gas delivery passage if the bite block; and

when the gas distribution manifold is disengaged from the bite block and the bite block is removed from the mouth of the patient the oral outlet port is adapted to direct gas over or toward the mouth of the patient.

22. (Cancelled).

23. (Currently Amended) A method of delivering a gas to the nasal passages and the mouth of a patient according to claim 28 [[22]], wherein the gas is delivered to the patient during recovery from anaesthesia.

24. (Currently Amended) A method of delivering a gas to the nasal passages and the mouth of a patient according to claim 28 [[22]], wherein the gas is an oxygen rich gas.

25. (Cancelled).

26. (Cancelled).

27. (Cancelled).

28. (New) A method of delivering gas to a patient during and after an endoscopic procedure using apparatus comprising a gas distribution manifold having a gas inlet port, a nasal gas outlet port, an oral gas outlet port, and attachment means for attaching the manifold to the patient, and a annular bite block detachably connected to the manifold, the method comprising the steps of:

attaching the apparatus to the patient using the attachment means with the bite block located in the mouth of the patient;

supplying gas to the patient via the gas inlet port, the nasal gas outlet port, and the oral gas outlet port;

performing an endoscopic procedure on the patient while continuing to supply gas to the patient;

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removing the bite block from the patient and detaching the bite block from the manifold while leaving the manifold attached to the patient; and

performing one or more further procedures on the patient or allowing the patient to recover while continuing to supply gas to the patient via the nasal gas outlet port and the oral gas outlet port.